

Americans struggling to make it through the weakest economy in a generation. Since President Bush took office, 2.3 million private sector jobs have been lost, the worst jobs record for any President since the end of World War II. The unemployment rate is stuck at a 6-year high. We will see millions of Americans whose retirement plans have been crushed by the fall of the stock market. The Dow dropped below 8,000 again yesterday; and overall, the market has lost trillions of dollars in value since President Bush took office. We will see firefighters and police officers who still sit exposed on the front lines of homeland defense, desperate for help from this Congress. It has been nearly a year and a half since September 11, but Republicans have done shockingly little to increase America's defenses here at home.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats have fought for these priorities. We have proposed economic stimulus plans to create at least 1 million new jobs this year, put money and purchasing power in the hands of consumers, and provide relief to struggling small businesses; and we have tried time and again to make Americans safer at home by meeting critical homeland security needs.

Unfortunately for the American people, Mr. Speaker, Republicans have the power in Washington, and just take a look at the government they control. We will see an out-of-touch Republican Congress that arrogantly refuses to do the job they have been elected to do: address critical needs like homeland security and education. Republicans will not help firefighters or increase port security, but they have relaxed their own ethics rules in the House of Representatives. Mr. Speaker, we will see a Republican Party that has but one answer for every problem: budget-busting tax breaks for millionaires that will do nothing to stimulate the economy this year. Soldiers and firefighters are putting their lives on the line to keep Americans safe at home, and President Bush is pushing \$90,000 tax breaks for everyone making \$1 million or more a year. Middle-class Americans are struggling through the worst economy in a generation, but the Bush plan would provide half of all taxpayers with less than \$100.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, it appears that Republicans just do not understand the real state of the Union for the vast majority of America, because if they did, they would not insist on sacrificing the security interests of all Americans to pay for tax breaks for the most privileged few. That is just wrong. It is time that Republicans stopped stifling homeland security to pay for tax breaks for millionaires, and it is time they stopped using their political power to divide this great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, last week I attended a mobilization ceremony for a reservist in Grand Prairie Texas who had been called to active duty. These brave men

and women are making a great sacrifice for their country, leaving their families and jobs to support our troops overseas. I was struck by their courage and by their willingness to put aside their own personal concerns to serve their country. That spirit of unity and sacrifice has made America great for the past 2 centuries. I hope it is the spirit President Bush remembers tonight during his State of the Union and that the Republican Congress puts into practice so that we can finally address our economic and homeland security challenges.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, after 9-11, it became obvious to all of us, I think on both sides of the aisle, that we needed to equip the people at the local level who will respond to terrorist attacks with the best equipment that we could possibly find to make certain their equipment was compatible and safe enough to do the job. For reasons that I find difficult to fathom, the White House has resisted efforts to do that on four separate occasions.

The first example is what happened on the supplemental a year ago. After 9-11, the committee, on both sides of the aisle, agreed that we ought to add more money for first responders, and we tried to do that. The White House strenuously resisted. In fact, at one point the President personally told us that he would veto one dime more than the White House had appropriated for homeland security items. Despite that fact, on a bipartisan basis, the House and the Senate approved \$400 million in funding for first responders in that supplemental.

Then, last year, in their second supplemental which the administration sent up, they still provided no request for first responders. Again, the House and the Senate, acting on a bipartisan basis in both Houses provided, after much White House resistance, \$551 million for first responders for firemen, for policemen, and the other folks at the local level who are our first line of defense against terrorist attacks in our communities. The President vetoed \$350 million of that \$500 million.

Finally, the administration did request \$3.5 billion for first responders in the regular 2003 appropriations bill, but it then proceeded to back the political strategy in the House that prevented the veterans under the VA-HUD bill from coming to the floor; and it prevented the State, Justice, Commerce appropriations bill from coming to the floor. As a result, neither of those bills which were supposed to contain funding for first responders, neither of those bills passed. And then, when the continuing resolution finally passed, which was supposed to contain \$650 million for first responders, the White House saw to it that the agency would not apportion that money among the States and localities.

So after we have that track record, the White House resistance to bipartisan congressional support for adding money for first responders, the White House chief of staff went on national television last Sunday, Mr. Card did, and told Mr. Russert, the moderator, and the entire country that the only reason first responders were not getting their money is because the Congress had not done its job.

Baloney. In capital letters, BALONEY.

The fact is that both political parties, on a bipartisan basis in both the House and the Senate, on four separate occasions tried to meet our responsibilities in providing the funding that was needed for first responders and, the White House, in each of those instances, either flatly rejected the money or saw to it that they would use their power in order to squeeze down the amount of money that we wanted to provide for those initiatives.

So now, what I am going to urge Members to do when we get to the resolution today is to vote for a motion which we will offer which restores that needed money for first responders.

It is time for two things to happen: it is time for the White House to stop peddling fiction about why the first responders at the local level do not have badly needed money to deal with terrorism problems at the local level; and, secondly, it is time for us to actually get the money out to them so that we do not have to sit, the next time we have a terrorist attack saying, gee whiz, I wish we had done something.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1230

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Joint Resolution 13, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

#### FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 2003

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the rule just adopted, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 13) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2003, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The text of House Joint Resolution 13 is as follows:

H.J. RES. 13

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Public Law 107-229 is further amended by striking the date specified in section 107(c) and inserting in lieu thereof "February 7, 2003."*

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 29, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us, H.J. Resolution 13, is a continuing resolution to continue to allow the government to operate through February 7th of this year. This is merely a date extension. It does not change anything else. We have not added any anomalies to those that were previously agreed to.

We need to pass this CR today for one very simple reason. If I can just go back quickly and remember, the last CR we passed, we actually passed two CRs, one that was sent to the President to allow the government to continue to function, and the other that was sent to the other body to be used as a vehicle for the final appropriations bill for fiscal year 2003.

The other body has now worked its will on that CR. They have added to it, the remaining 11 appropriation bills that had not been concluded prior to the adjournment of the 107th Congress. We are still awaiting the paperwork from the other body so that we can appoint conferees and go to conference on that package.

I would say to my friends that there are many differences between the Senate version of this appropriations bill and the House version, so there will have to be a conference.

If we can receive those papers expeditiously, like today or tomorrow, we will move to go to conference immediately. Some of the pre-conference work has already been done, but there is still a lot more to be done, so we are anxious to receive the papers. But since we are not to that point yet in the process, we do need this CR to keep the government up and running until February 7th.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 7 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to spend just a moment or two discussing how we got to this place, and then repeat for emphasis what I just said on the rule, so people understand what it is we are going to be trying to do here today.

We are really in the situation where, well into the fiscal year, we have yet to pass 11 of the 13 appropriation bills,

primarily because the budget resolution that was brought to this House floor in the first instance unrealistically stated what the needs of the country would be, or the congressional estimate of what those needs would be. So to try to keep the session moving anyway, the majority party brought out two appropriation bills. Then the system just sort of fell apart because of the unreality of the budget resolution, and we have been stuck with no other appropriation bills becoming law, so we have been operating on continuing resolutions.

I would ask the gentleman, is this continuing resolution number 13? Something like that. I have lost track, we have had so many of them.

Now we are supposed to pass yet another continuing resolution so that the House and Senate have more time in order to put together an omnibus appropriation bill which will at long last produce funding for all of the domestic agencies in the Federal Government. So this proposal is here to give us another week to get that work done.

Mr. Speaker, we have two questions left. Number 1 is, what is the appropriate funding for those appropriation bills; and number 2, when are we going to get it done? As far as I know, we still do not have paper on this side of the Capitol, so we still do not know what the Senate has done in detail.

This proposal before us now simply keeps the government open. The question is, what level of funding should we have in this short-term CR? We believe that, in addition to the funding that is being provided under the resolution being brought to the floor by the gentleman from Florida, we ought to add another \$3.5 billion to fund the first responders, so that our policemen and our firemen and our public health people can get about the business of protecting us at the local level. We cannot expect State governments to provide this money, because they are in massive deficits all around the country. If we do not provide it, it is not going to get provided.

The second thing we want to do is to provide \$90 million to Centers for Disease Control for baseline health screening, so we can do a long-term assessment of the health exposure experienced by first providers at the Pentagon and in New York on 9-11 when they ran into the combat zone, so to speak, and experienced an assault by many chemicals, some of which were suspected of being highly toxic.

So that is what we want to do. As I said, I think it is especially important to do this in light of the misstatement by the White House Chief of Staff on national television last week. Last week, as I said in my earlier remarks, Mr. Card, the White House Chief of Staff, told Tim Russert, the moderator of Meet the Press, that the reason that the first responders did not have the money that they needed was because Congress had not acted on the money and had tied it up.

I found that especially quaint given the fact that the President vetoed the lion's share of the money that we provided for first responders in the supplemental last year, money which would have gone through to the local communities if the administration had not vetoed bipartisan congressional efforts. So what we see is that on four occasions, as I said earlier, the White House has either blocked or resisted bipartisan efforts in both Houses to provide additional money for first responders.

I will ask the House at the proper time today to approve this motion to recommit so that we can add this funding. I want to point out that it will still keep us within the Republican budget resolution. We will still have over \$1 billion head room in the Republican budget resolution if we add this amendment, because the continuing resolution is operating at a funding level significantly below that Republican funding resolution.

So I do not want to hear any claptrap on the floor today about how we are busting the budget with this motion. We are not; we are staying within the confines of the Republican budget resolution. But within that, we are saying it is time, it is time to deliver the money that the first responders thought they were going to get a long time ago, so we can get about the business, for a change, of dealing with substantive problems, rather than ping-ponging political arguments while we send no money to the people who are going to be on the front lines if we have any further terrorist attacks.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RUPPERSBERGER).

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on the issue of first-line responders, I was a former Baltimore County Executive. Baltimore County is a county of over 750,000 people. The Second District that I represent has BWI Airport and the Port of Baltimore. We are very much concerned about the issue of the monies being put into the budget as it relates to first responders.

One of the most important issues that we have if there is another terrorist attack, which we understand there will be, is that we need to be prepared. Our police officers and our firefighters are the first responders. Not only do they need to be protected themselves, but if they are not protected, they will not be able to protect our citizens.

So we urge the President and urge Congress to move forward with the monies that are necessary to make sure that we secure our homeland.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I want to walk through once more what the record is with respect to dealing with this problem.

Right after 9-11, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) and I went down

to the White House. He and I and our staff chiefs, when we were locked out of our offices because of the anthrax scare, he and I went downtown to the White House after we had spent a week talking to every security agency in town, virtually, trying to find out what they thought the needs were on the homeland security front.

We went down to the White House, expecting to have a give-and-take discussion about what additional funding we ought to provide. We ran smack into the President of the United States, who walked into the room, shook hands, sat down, and then said, and I am paraphrasing, but this is pretty close, he said, well, I understand some of you want to provide more money for homeland security; but I want you to know that my good friend, Mitch Daniels, tells me that we have more than enough money in the budget for our request. I want you to know if Congress spends one dime more on homeland security than we have asked for in our budget, I will veto the bill. Now I have time for four or five comments, and then I have to get out of here. That is what he said.

So when my turn came, I expressed my lack of enthusiasm to that kind of rigid response, and I proceeded to ask the President a number of questions about security threats to a number of Federal installations, threats which were serious and classified. We urged the President to reconsider.

In the end, over White House opposition, this Congress on a bipartisan basis provided \$4 billion additional money for homeland security, including, I believe, about \$400 million for first responders. Then last year in the spring supplemental, as I indicated earlier, the White House asked for no additional money for first responders; so no money for our policemen, no money for our firemen, no money for our public health people.

The House and Senate worked again on a bipartisan basis, and we provided \$551 million in that supplemental. The President vetoed \$350 million of that amount. Then finally the administration slowly awoke, and it provided \$3.5 billion in their budget request for 2003; but then they cooperated in a procedure that prevented that money from ever becoming law, because they agreed with the procedure that kept the VA-HUD bill and the State-Justice-Commerce bill from ever coming to the floor.

So now we are operating under a continuing resolution which provides \$650 million, far less than we need for first responders. We need several billion more. Yet, even after the administration had that authority to spend the money, they refused to allocate the money to the States. They have been fiddling around about proposed formula changes, rather than getting the stuff out there so we can accelerate our preparedness at the local level.

If Members think we are ready for another attack, I invite them to read

the report of the Rudman-Hart Commission, which spells out that we are still mortally unprepared to deal with local attacks.

□ 1245

So now we are faced with this situation, and despite the fact that the track record clearly shows that the administration has been resistant to congressional efforts to provide assistance to first responders, the White House Chief of Staff has told the country that it is the Congress that has not provided the money, when in fact the Congress on three occasions did provide the money or tried to and on each of those occasions the White House resisted.

So what we will be asking the House to do is to provide this additional funding: the \$3.5 billion to first responders and the \$90 million for the epidemiological studies of the health impacts on the firemen and police personnel who had to respond at the Pentagon and in New York after 9-11. And we would remind our friends on both sides of the aisle that this does not bust the budget. If you vote for our amendment, it will still keep us within the Republican budget resolution which seems to be so important on that side of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, I do so to explain to the Members that first responders are extremely important to dealing with any kind of a terrorist attack that might occur anywhere in the United States of America. And we will be addressing the issue of first responders when we do the final appropriations bill, which I have talked about in my opening remarks. But I want to compliment the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) because he has been very personally involved in identifying not only the needs of first responders but the needs of existing security agencies, and police agencies. And as he pointed out, he and I both did a very thorough survey of all of the needs of those agencies, especially the FBI, for example. Those will be the things that we will be addressing very shortly in the final appropriations bill for fiscal year 2003. I appreciate his interests and I know they are genuine, but we are going to deal with them in the regular order.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON), a member of the committee.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and the distinguished ranking member for raising the point about the first responders. And I want to say as a member of the committee I certainly want to do everything I can to support addressing this issue with the first responders. It is very important. And yet at the same time, I think we need to go ahead and pass this resolution today

because, Mr. Speaker, it is unfinished business, unfinished from last Congress. There were a lot of dynamics that kept us from passing it. Frankly, it kind of got away from the Committee on Appropriations, otherwise, I think we would not be standing here today.

But the reality is, Mr. Speaker, we need to get this off the table so that we can move on to other things, addressing the economy, addressing Iraq, addressing Medicare and a prescription drug benefit, some of the things that I hope the President will talk about tonight when he addresses this Chamber.

One of the things I want to mention is in terms of the situation in the Middle East, and I guess people are reading what Mr. Blix and the weapons inspectors' report is, and they are spinning it their own way for their own convenience and their own purposes; but it is very clear that it is a very difficult question that Saddam Hussein has had weapons of mass destruction, terrorist and biological weapons. And the question is not so much, well, he won the scavenger hunt, but did he prove that he has disarmed. And I think most people will agree that that has not been proven.

I make these remarks, Mr. Speaker, because in my district a week ago I stood dock side at Savanna, Georgia, and then boarded a ship called the U.S.S. *Mendonca*, which was named after Private Leroy Mendonca, who was killed in the Korean conflict on July 4, 1951, who was a member of the Third Infantry Division. That ship is a special cargo roll-on, roll-off ship that was loading along with its sister ship about 450,000 square feet of tanks, Humvees, personnel movers and helicopters, on their way to destinations not clearly known.

A few days later I stood at the dais at Hunter Air Field and watched some of America's youngest, finest and most experienced and some of the older soldiers boarding airplanes going off to Kuwait. As I shook those soldiers' hands, and I went out there a couple of times, and I want to say parenthetically, great work is being done by a group called Southern Smiles, the U.S.O., and the Red Cross in terms of giving these soldiers some very needed personal items, but as I stood there and said good-bye to these soldiers I thought, they are going off to do their job, and now it is our turn and my turn as a Member of Congress to go off and do my job in Washington, D.C. and that is to protect the country as we see it from our standpoint, often through legislation and usually through appropriations. And, therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is so important that we get this bill finished up so that we can start the appropriations process once more for the coming term with a special eye to the troops overseas, and not just in the Middle East, but all over the globe.

We have a very troubled universe as we know it, but we have got to get our modernization continued. We have to

have our troops ready for any contingency, and we have to have the quality of life of soldiers in mind at all times.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members of this House to support this resolution and let us get on with next year's business.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Let me simply say to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) that as far as I am concerned he has done everything humanly possible to try to see to it that we could provide the needed money to first responders. He tried that a year ago on the supplemental when he was pushed into backing away by the White House and by his own leadership, but we still got \$4 billion additional homeland security money in that bill despite the resistance of the White House. And he also worked with us cooperatively to see to it that we had more money in the supplemental this previous summer for homeland security and for first responders. Again, the White House vetoed those efforts, so I congratulate the gentleman for his efforts. I just wish that the White House had been responsive to them. If they had, we would not be sitting here now worrying about the fact that they still do not have dime one that they need at the local level.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TURNER).

Mr. TURNER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the chairman of the committee and the ranking member for their diligent efforts in trying to adequately fund our homeland security needs. And I think what this motion to recommit is all about on this floor today is to try to ensure that we do that promptly.

I think we all know that September 11 was a declaration of war by terrorists against the United States. It was an unprecedented cruelty perpetrated against the American people that foreshadowed a new age in our country, a new kind of war, a new challenge. And this motion to recommit seeks to make good our response to that challenge.

We clearly confront an enemy that lurks in the shadows, runs from battle; and we must be willing to make the necessary changes in our budgeting and the necessary sacrifices as a people to ensure that this new kind of war is won and won decisively by the United States.

Today the frontline of the war on terror is found in places like the airports in Boston, the hospitals in Houston, the ports of Los Angeles. Those who fight this war for America are the police officers, the firefighters, the health care workers. They are the first on to respond to any kind of attack on our homeland, and they will be there to respond to those attacks.

Mr. Speaker, in this new kind of war, the struggle to end an effort by a cruel and merciless foe, we know that victory will not come out without a dedication on our part to seeing this battle through. The keys to victory are vigilance, preparedness and perseverance;

and that is why it is also important today to recommit this bill to ensure that we put the necessary money in the bill now to fund these very, very legitimate needs.

I heard a State senator from my home State yesterday who said, Is homeland security going to be another unfunded mandate to the States? The answer to that should be clearly no. It is a national responsibility to protect this homeland; and the only way to do it is to put the money in the bill now to take care of these homeland security needs that I think the chairman and the ranking member of this committee both believe should be in it.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT).

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to correct something that our colleague from Texas just said. He said that the only way to do this is to deal with it in this bill. This bill is simply a continuing resolution to keep the government functioning for another week. There will be plenty of time for this kind of debate. I think they will find plenty of support on this side of the aisle for the first responders. I do not think there is anybody over here who does not appreciate what the first responders do. But the fact of the matter is that the bill that is before us today is a continuing resolution to keep the government open. I think we all agree that that ought to happen. Nobody here, not on that side, not on this side, wants the government to shut down. So the idea that it has to be done on this bill or it will not get done is simply not true.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GUTKNECHT. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I was assured that the gentleman said there will be debate on these appropriations. My only question is, in which fiscal year will the debate on the current appropriations occur, this one or next one? We are starting to run out of fiscal year.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, obviously there will be debate when the matter comes before the House on the bill coming back from the Senate. I suspect there will be additional debate when we take up the budget resolution and the appropriation bills for the next fiscal year. There will be adequate time both in that year and in this year to have that debate, but that is not the debate for this afternoon.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GUTKNECHT. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank him. I am reassured because he just said something very important and precedent setting. He said when we debate the appropri-

tions bills for the next fiscal year. We did not debate the appropriation bills for this fiscal year. So at least I will take comfort from an assurance from the majority that in the next fiscal year, unlike the current one, the House may actually debate the appropriations bills.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, well, the good news is this year the House and the Senate are under the same management. We do expect thorough debates on all of the appropriation bills this year; and more importantly, we expect for the first time in a year and a half they will actually have a budget resolution in the Senate that we can work with and that will make life easier for both of us.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, we have been hearing we will do it next time around for a year and a half. Meanwhile, you have gotten zip to the local people who need it the most. We were told a year ago, oh, we will do it down the line. We were told in the supplemental, oh, we will do it down the line. Now you are saying here, we will do it down the line. Do it now.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to do it now. What we want to do now is get the continuing resolution off the desk and get it down to the other body and to the President. Then we will do it now on the final wrap up bill for the fiscal year 2003. And if that is not adequate to satisfy the needs of the first responders, then we will have a supplemental appropriations bill which will be before the House very shortly. And if that does not take care of everything, then we have the fiscal year 2004 appropriations bill; but I think we will get this job done pretty quickly.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman mentioned supplemental. I would suggest he call the White House and tell the President to reconsider his veto of the last supplemental that we sent to him where he denied us the ability to get \$300 million to those first responders.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, the gentleman just touched a sore spot, there is no doubt about that. The Congress and the President had a little different opinion on that particular bill.

But I wanted to comment on the remarks the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. TURNER) who just spoke. He said that this is a national responsibility. Mr. Speaker, protecting the homeland, being able to respond to a terrorist attack or whatever the threat might be threatens everybody, not just the national government, not just the State governments, not just

the local governments. But the response to a terrorist attack has to be a partnership.

□ 1300

The local governments have a responsibility to do things that they do far better and far more effectively than the Federal Government. We need the ability that is provided by local governments and local organizations and local first responders.

In addition, we need the partnership with the States because the States do certain things that we cannot do nearly as well, and then, of course, the Federal Government has a major responsibility. So this is not just a national obligation or responsibility. This is a partnership.

We all have to be in position to play our respective roles in responding to a terrorist attack or preventing a terrorist attack. We all have to work together. It is not just the Federal Government. And so, again, I go back to this, Mr. Speaker, let us get this continuing resolution through the House, down to the other body and to the President, and then hopefully, during that same time period, we will be able to conference the final appropriations bill for fiscal year 2003, and then we will clear the decks for a supplemental and for the 2004 appropriations business.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 10 seconds.

It does require a partnership between the local and Federal Government. The problem is the Federal Government will not come out on the dance floor and dance. They are leaving the locals out there alone. They have yet to provide one dime in new money.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER).

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, it amazes me how glibly we talk about the fact that this is just another continuing resolution, we are going to do something later. When immediately after September 11, 2001, we sprang into action here, passing legislation giving the world and certainly the people of the United States that the Congress was not afraid to meet its obligations, but certainly one of the most important obligations we have is to fund the Federal Government.

Instead, we have dithered and dillyed and dallied around discussing continuing resolutions. The Senate passes an omnibus bill. We will go to conference with them. We may do another CR. We just do not know. Are we going to do two budgets simultaneously? I really think it is outrageous that so little attention has been paid in the country to what has been going on here. Frankly, it distresses me that while all this is going on, we are back home in our districts when I think we should be here working.

We made promises after September 11, couple of days later, we are going to fortify our Army at home. The President and most Members of Congress went to New York to Ground Zero promising enormous amounts of help and to do something about the borders of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the borders of the United States are in disarray. I represent part of the northern border area. We are concerned all the time with the people who come across the border into Vermont and to Maine. INS told me shortly after September 11 that there were 11 million persons in the United States illegally. They did not know who they were, where they were or what they were up to.

We have a mammoth task before us, and certainly getting the Federal budget straightened out and money back to the first responders is critical.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would advise my colleagues that I have no further requests for speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORBERRY). The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) has 1½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) has 18 minutes remaining.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ).

(Mr. MENENDEZ asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for not only yielding time, but offering this most important motion that I believe that all of us who say we want to defend the homeland should be on this floor supporting when the time comes.

Tonight the President of the United States will come before the Congress and the Nation. He will talk about the state of the Union. He will say that our economy is headed in the right direction. We believe it is headed in the wrong direction, but more importantly, in some respect, he will talk about the challenges we face abroad.

But we have two wars, Mr. President. One is the one that you seek to have us engaged in Iraq. There you are sending the greatest talent that America has to offer. You are sending an incredible amount of equipment. You are sending billions of dollars.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair requests that the gentleman address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, the other war is here at home, and in that war, America has been left virtually defenseless, virtually defenseless. Instead of putting the best resources, the greatest opportunity to those people who I witnessed from my congressional district which sits on the west bank of the Hudson for which the World Trade

Center was, in fact, a part of the normal landscape, those who responded on that fateful day of September 11 was not the Federal Government, was not the Defense Department, was not the Federal emergency management.

No, it was police officers and firefighters and emergency management and hospitals and public health systems, and to them, we have taken many pictures, but we have done absolutely nothing about providing one red cent so that they can be prepared, God forbid, for the next attack.

Who did the CIA say was America's greatest threat? It was al Qaeda and bin Laden, the greatest threat to terrorism on domestic soil, and yet all of our focus is elsewhere, and yet the President takes picture with individuals, with our police officers, with our firefighters, and no wonder, when they have not received one red cent, they say, Mr. President, you have merely been using firefighters and their families for one big photo opportunity. The Virginia Professional Firefighters Association and others, the president of the International Association of Firefighters says, Mr. President, you are either with us or against us. You cannot have it both ways. Do not lionize our fallen brothers in one breath and then eliminate funding for our members to fight terrorism and stay safe.

There is a war here at home, and we have not prepared nor have we funded for it. I know that as I have traveled the country when I chaired the task force for House Democrats on homeland security, I can tell my colleagues that what I heard from first responders is that the plans we have on the shelf have nothing to do with chemical or biological weaponry, has nothing to do with the potential nuclear activity. We are not planning for it. We have not prepared for it, and we do not even have the equipment to deal with it.

It is time for us not to listen to the counsel of patience and delay and wait for the next attack to be prepared. It is time for us to act now. Vote for the gentleman's motion to recommit so that we can give the first responders in this country the possibility of responding to the Nation's security and the next possible attack. God forbid, we do not do this now. We have waited already too long.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, could I inquire again how much time we have remaining on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) has 8 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) has 18 minutes remaining and previously advised the Chair he does not have any further speakers.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, the rescue workers were there for us when

we needed them. The question before this body today is will we, the Federal Government, be there for them when they need us? I rise strongly in support of the gentleman from Wisconsin's (Mr. OBEY) motion to recommit that provides the necessary funding to help protect this country, but I particularly want to speak about one program that was instituted and planned to help the first responders in New York City, and that is the \$90 million proposed monitoring of health care at Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York.

The 12 million that was originally allocated will run out in July, and only a small portion of the roughly 40,000 workers, and I mean laborer, fire, construction worker, those that were exposed to these deadly, deadly toxins, have been screened.

Earlier, in a bipartisan way, we passed a supplemental, but that was vetoed, and these heroes need to be helped, and what I see is sort of the selective amnesia. When it is time to have a photo op or time to talk about heroes, everybody is there for the photo op, but when it comes to the time to allocate the money to the men and women who need the health care and need the continued services, it has not been there.

Underscoring this is an important Mt. Sinai study that came out yesterday showing the illnesses and persistent illnesses caused by 9-11, and I include it for the RECORD.

I rise in support of Representative OBEY's motion to recommit, which provides crucial funding to help protect the country.

In particular, I support the \$90 million to continue the health monitoring at Mount Sinai hospital for the men and women who were on the front lines of defense on September 11th and the days that followed.

Sixteen months after that fateful day, we must make sure that those brave men and women who entered a battle zone of a new kind of war, and are really the first victims of the war, receive the medical care they deserve.

Underscoring the need for this money was a report released yesterday by Mount Sinai hospital showing that a majority of ground zero workers and volunteers screened for health problems have serious persistent illnesses from the disaster.

The initial screening program which ends this July will screen only about 9,000 of the approximately 40,000 rescue workers in need of medical attention.

Dr. Stephen Levin and Dr. Robin Burton said the findings showed "disturbing levels of long term health problems" and that it was "alarming." The analysis reveals that over 50 percent of the sample study have pulmonary illnesses, ear, nose, and throat ailments, or persistent mental health problems.

They believe the same statistics will hold for the roughly 3,500 responders they have seen to date: 78 percent of the participants reported at least one World Trade Center-related pulmonary symptom that first developed or worsened as a result of their rescue efforts; 52 percent reported mental health symptoms requiring further evaluation; and only about one-third of the sample participants had received any

prior medical care for any of their symptoms and conditions.

In other words, for about one-third of these participants, their trip to Mount Sinai had been their only source of medical care; emphasizing the critical need to fully fund this program now, not later, not months down the road. Medical monitoring delayed is proper health care denied.

Last week Senator CLINTON, in a bipartisan effort, again successfully directed \$90 million dollars from FEMA for this purpose. But again we face the challenge of securing the House support and the Administration's support and leadership to make this happen.

These firefighters are just here to pick up their check not only for themselves, but for the ironworkers, the construction workers, laborers, rescue workers, volunteers, and their families who care deeply about their health.

Medical monitoring delayed is proper health care denied.

The rescue workers and volunteers were there for us when we needed them, now the question is will the federal government be there for them.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY).

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) for offering this recommit motion and implore my colleagues all to support it.

Members of the New York State delegation, both Republican and Democratic, met with retired Marine Corps General and now director of antiterrorism for the New York City Police Department Frank LiButti this morning to discuss New York City's homeland security needs.

Our needs are real, they are deep, and they are not being reflected in this budget. The President has talked a good game of protecting our first responders, but then why did he veto the medical monitoring funding of \$90 million added on a bipartisan basis by the New York delegation in the summer supplemental? Mr. Bush said it was not an emergency.

Many of my friends are firefighters. Many of those friends are conservative Republicans. They know and the entire New York City Fire Department know the people who first rushed into the World Trade Center, the people who lost over 300 of their brothers and sisters that day know that this is an emergency. Why does not our President and why does not President Bush recognize the emergency to protect my city and all of our major metropolitan areas from terrorism?

Do we rationally think that if we go to war with Iraq that al Qaeda and other terrorist groups will not strike again? The question is not if, but when. The sound bites from the White House are great, and the President, he will talk tough tonight, and the Republican leadership here will say that they are working on it, but the time for backslapping is over. It is now time to deliver for New York City.

We have missed Osama bin Laden. We have ignored our firefighters at Ground

Zero. Let us not ignore them anymore. Let us recommit and pass the Obey supplemental bill.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield the remaining 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the distinguished minority leader.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time, and I thank him for his leadership in bringing this very important motion to the floor.

I stand here beside this photograph of the first responder with the President of the United States with great pride. We can all associate ourselves with that moment. As the President embraces the firefighter, so did the entire Nation.

On September 11, the whole world watched in horror when we saw the tragedy unfolding in New York and elsewhere and resolved that we must do everything in our power to make sure that such a tragedy never happens again. We also watched in awe to see the courageous action of the first responder, the police and firemen. That is why it is so hard to understand why we even have to go through this today.

Does not the entire country agree that these firefighters and policemen, the first responders, are owed a debt of gratitude by our Nation? Do we want people to take risks to save the lives of others when we will not even fund a study to take a measure of what impact their courage may have had on their personal physical health?

In the President's State of the Union Address last year, he promised to help local communities train and equip their first responders and provide for other homeland security needs. I listened with interest as the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Appropriations said that this is not just a national responsibility, it is also a State and local.

□ 1315

It is indeed that. But as elected officials at the national level, our first responsibility is to protect the American people, to make this country safe. Certainly we do that jointly with the local and State governments, but they have incurred tremendous costs, \$2.6 billion as far as the municipalities are concerned; practically \$75 billion in terms of the States in order to help take up some of our national responsibility that we have not funded.

And why have we not funded it? Because the administration and the Republicans have said that, for example, the \$5 billion that was proposed in the other body as an amendment for first responders was well-intentioned but unaffordable. Well-intentioned but unaffordable. And the \$1.5 billion that Congress passed and the President refuses to spend cannot be spent because we are on a war-time budget.

How do we explain this to the American people? How do we explain it to this brave firefighter and his family, that we can afford a \$674 billion tax



cut, largely benefiting the wealthiest people in our country, but we cannot afford \$1.5 billion already passed by Congress for our law enforcement, for homeland security, and we cannot afford the well-intentioned, but unaffordable, \$5 billion for homeland security? And this amendment includes a \$90 million study.

Nothing could be clearer in terms of the need. Nothing could be more specific in terms of the remedy. Nothing challenges our conscience more that we would turn away from the first responders when they are suffering effects from the courage that we all identified with, worshipped at the shrine of, embraced, yet now we cannot do it. We are too busy giving \$674 billion largely to the wealthiest people in our country. Where are our priorities?

So tonight when the President comes to the floor to give the State of the Union address, I, like every other person in America, will welcome him with great anticipation and great respect. We all want our President to succeed. We all want to be in as much agreement with him as possible. But we cannot listen to rhetoric about first responders. We cannot look at photo ops and see the sincerity that we know is there, because our President is a sincere person, if this Congress refuses to match the compassion with the \$90 million that is necessary for this study.

I commend our colleagues from New York for bringing this to our attention and just say that this all takes place in the context of rejecting the \$5 billion; rejecting the \$90 million, rejecting the \$1.5 billion, the pocket veto of the \$150 million in emergency responder grants in August of last year, and the Justice Department temporarily suspending award grants to the first responders that I already referenced, and, according to calculations, the slashing in the budget is roughly \$200 million out of the \$3.5 billion for first responders.

It just goes on and on and on. There is a consistent pattern of saying we cannot afford this. Well, if we cannot afford to come to their rescue, how can we expect them to come to ours? If we cannot afford to come to their rescue, how on Earth can we afford a \$674 billion tax cut for the wealthiest people in America?

I know that is not the sentiment of this body. I know that is not the sentiment of our distinguished chairman. So let us all follow the lead of the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and get this over with quickly before more people find out what is going on on this floor today; that this House may reject this \$90 million study.

Mr. Speaker, with that I urge my colleagues to support the Obey motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). The time of the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) has expired.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms.

PELOSI) and congratulate her. This is the first chance I have had to congratulate her publicly for her ascension in a historic way to the high position of leadership of her party. However, what it means is that she has removed herself from the committee that I have the privilege of chairing. And I would say that while we did not always agree, it was always a very distinct pleasure to work with her as a member of the Committee on Appropriations. So I would say to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) that we will miss her, but I am sure we are going to see her a lot during the 108th Congress.

I listened to her statement, and I appreciate the fact that she used the picture, as well as the previous speaker's use of the picture, of President Bush standing alongside a firefighter at Ground Zero in New York City. President Bush responded quickly and effectively to September 11th. No one can even challenge that. I think maybe what is happening here today, while we are talking about a continuing resolution, is a lot of debate that has to do with the regular appropriations bill. Maybe we are trying to make an argument where no argument exists.

As I listened to the gentleman from New Jersey talking about the first responders at the local level, he is absolutely right. He made the point far more effectively than I did when I mentioned the importance of first responders. The people on the scene, the people in the cities, the people in the counties, are going to respond first to any event that is of a terrorist nature or a weapons-of-mass-destruction nature. They are going to respond. And they do need the support and the help of the Federal Government and of the State governments. The States have some responsibilities as well.

So we are arguing about something that doesn't really need arguing about. The problem is the motion to instruct by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) will be dealing with an appropriations issue and this bill is a continuing resolution, that just continues funding at last year's level. It does not create any new programs. It does not appropriate any new money. The final bill for fiscal year 2003 that we will be dealing with is available to deal with first responders.

But I want to get back to September 11th and this picture. Again, I say I appreciate the fact that the minority used the picture of President Bush, because he did respond. He responded in a local way, in a State way, in a national way, and in an international way.

Please, do not take the picture away. It encourages me when I look at it.

The President did a really good job, but he did it in partnership with the Congress. Right after September 11th occurred, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and I sat down with our counterparts in the other body, and we came up with an appropriations bill, an emergency appropriations bill, of \$40 billion.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, let me simply say the gentleman is correct, we did; and I was immensely proud of the House on both sides of the aisle for cooperating in producing that bill, and I was flabbergasted that that cooperation on the part of the White House did not extend to our next request to provide for additional money, including the first responders.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, and I was happy to yield to my friend from Wisconsin, but I would point out the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and I sat down with our counterparts in the Senate and we produced a bill of \$40 billion that was, I think, passed unanimously in the House and I believe in the Senate as well, to make money immediately available to the first responders, to FEMA, to police, to firemen, to whoever needed the money after September 11th.

As a matter of fact, we did something very unusual, Mr. Speaker. Of the \$40 billion, we allowed the executive branch to use immediately \$10 billion with no strings attached to respond to September 11th, to respond to terrorism, and to do what had to be done immediately. Then we gave them an additional \$10 billion that they could basically do whatever they wanted to with, but there were a few congressional strings. We just required that they report to us on what they were doing with that \$10 billion.

So the Congress responded rapidly. The Administration moved quickly. Then the other \$20 billion, the second half of the \$40 billion, we allocated through the appropriations process; but we asked the executive branch to suggest to the Congress how that money should be used. We did have some differences, but we worked out a plan that I think worked fairly well.

Now, there is a lot more that needs to be done. September 11 was something that many people in this country had never seen before. I think the only thing that really compares to September 11 was December 7, 1941, when Pearl Harbor was attacked and we went to war in World War II.

But, Mr. Speaker, this President responded well. This Congress responded well. The agencies of the government responded well. FEMA responded well. The folks in New York responded well, the Pentagon in Northern Virginia responded well, and Pennsylvania responded well when Flight 93 went into the ground. The Nation mobilized and responded very well. So we are creating an argument here where there is no argument. But maybe that is part of the process. You have to have an argument no matter what you do.

I want to get this CR passed from here today, and I want to get it off the

deck; and then I want to be able to proceed to the conference on the final bill for fiscal year 2003 where we will again address first responder-type issues as well as practically everything else in the government, except for defense and military construction, which have already passed and have already become law.

So let us pass this CR today. Let us defeat the motion that would slow down the process, that would make this an appropriations bill as opposed to a continuing resolution. Let us do that and then get on with our business.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, tonight the President will give his State of the Union address and next week the President will release his fiscal year 2004 budget, and we in the Congress have yet to pass 11 appropriations bills for fiscal year 2003 funding. We are now on our seventh continuing resolution. I am concerned that Congress is abdicating its Constitutional responsibilities. Before the adjournment of the 107th Congress, we had ample time to pass the physicians, hospitals, nursing homes, home health services and other health care providers. Our nation's seniors deserve better.

A cornerstone of a stable and dependable Medicare program is a system of adequate and appropriate reimbursements for health care providers. If payments are too high, or too low, the system will collapse and access to critical care for our seniors will be denied. Health care providers are being penalized for past federal accounting and legislative mistakes. Short-term fixes are necessary to ensure continuing access to quality care, while a comprehensive and thoughtful system of determining clinician reimbursements is developed. Medicare payments to physicians have already been cut by \$139.4 million. Under the current law, payments will be cut an additional \$695 million over the next three years.

I have been in close contact with physicians and other health care providers in the Houston area, many of whom appropriations bills. Again, we are faced with uncertainty in the budget process, which we cannot afford with the condition of the economy.

The latest unemployment figures indicate that nearly 6 percent of Americans are unemployed; 17 percent of African Americans are unemployed. Our nation is in an economic crisis that calls for leadership and a bold economic plan.

The nation's health care system is in need of reform. Millions of seniors rely on Medicare for their health care needs. Any Omnibus Appropriations Bill and the President's fiscal year 2004 budget must stabilize the Medicare program. Many Medicare beneficiaries, including seniors in my 18th Congressional District, are losing access to critical health care services because of the inadequacy of the current Medicare payment rates.

As a result of physician reductions in reimbursements, many Medicare bene-

ficiaries risk losing access to their work in small- and medium-sized businesses. They have made good faith efforts to ensure the continuity of comprehensive care for their Medicare patients, but they tell me that they cannot afford to do this forever. I am a co-sponsor of the Medicare Physicians Protection Act, which would impose a one-year freeze on the physician's fee schedule to protect our health care providers, and the patients who depend upon them.

Last week, the Senate passed a \$390 billion Omnibus Appropriations bill. The bill was passed with little debate and loaded with last-minute amendments. The large number of spending bills included in the Omnibus Appropriations package—11 in all—makes this year's budget debacle especially appalling. For instance, a provision in the bill may have major implications for how immigration applications are processed and how much they will cost. In the Senate Omnibus Appropriations bill, a provision to re-establish old requirements that immigrants applying for visas, citizenship or adjustment of family status pay a surcharge to subsidize the processing of applications by asylum seekers and refugees was included. However, the Homeland Security Department bill passed in November removed the surcharge on applicants, which can add as much as \$80.00 to a citizenship application. This is one issue that must be worked out in the conference committee on the Omnibus Appropriations Bill. This would adversely affect many of my constituents applying for visas, citizenship or adjusting their status in my 18th Congressional District.

In addition to immigration concerns, the Omnibus Appropriations bill must contain adequate funding levels to implement the Leave No Child Behind Act. We have become a government run by continuing resolution. I do not believe our Founding Fathers in their wisdom with grantings Congress the authority to raise revenue would have conceived a Congress not disciplined to follow our Constitutional mandate. This process is bad for the country and a poor reflection on the House and Senate.

On the issue of the economy, the President has the wrong plan. It will not stimulate the economy and create jobs. The cornerstone of the plan is the elimination of tax dividends, a proposal, which only helps the wealthy in this country and does not provide a stimulus to the economy.

Continuing resolutions, because they historically have been viewed as "must-pass" measures in view of the constitutional and statutory imperatives, became a major battleground for the resolution of budgetary and other conflicts. Consequently, the nature, scope, and duration of continuing resolutions began to change. I recognize the urgency in passing continuing resolutions; however, Congress must pass a serious comprehensive appropriations

bill that adequately funds domestic programs for our nation citizens from education to health care.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The joint resolution is considered as having been read for amendment.

Pursuant to House Resolution 29, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT OFFERED BY MR. OBEY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the joint resolution?

Mr. OBEY. Without the pending recommit motion, certainly.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. OBEY moves to recommit the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 13, to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report the same back forthwith with an amendment:

Section 101 of Public Law 107-229 in further amending by adding at the end:

"Provided further, \$3,500,000,000 is available for Federal Emergency Management Agency, Emergency Management and Planning Assistance, for state and local first responders homeland security grants to equip first responders, and \$90,000,000 is available for the Centers for Disease Control for baseline health screening and long-term medical monitoring of emergency response and recovery personnel exposed to toxic substances at the World Trade Center site."

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I make a point of order against the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his point of order.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I make a point of order against the motion to recommit because it violates section 302(c) of the Congressional Budget Act. Section 302(c) prohibits the consideration of any amendment that provides new budget authority for a fiscal year until the Committee on Appropriations has made the suballocations required by section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act.

This motion to recommit increases the amount of budget authorities provided by the measure. The suballocations published by the Committee on Appropriations on October 10, 2002, lapsed upon the adjournment of the 107th Congress and no new 302(b) suballocations have been made for the 108th Congress. Hence, I make a point of order that this motion to recommit violates section 302(c) of the Congressional Budget Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from Wisconsin wish to be heard on the point of order?



Mr. OBEY. I certainly do, Mr. Speaker.

The gentleman contends the motion is not in order because the majority has failed to file its 302(b) allocations. If this amendment were to be ruled out of order, what that would mean is that the majority has put the fix in in the Committee on Rules so that they can bring what they want to bring to the floor but the minority cannot.

In other words, the minority would be penalized procedurally for a failure to act on the part of the majority. I would find that to be a quaint interpretation indeed. It is patently unfair to allow the majority to bring up a bill without filing its suballocations and then punish the minority for something the majority has not done.

□ 1330

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). If no further Members wish to be heard on the point of order, the Chair is prepared to rule.

As the Chair ruled on January 8, 2003, supported by the House on appeal, section 302(c) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 precludes consideration of an appropriations measure, including an amendment, providing new budget authority after the Committee on Appropriations has received a section 302(a) allocation for a fiscal year until the committee makes the suballocations required under section 302(b).

The Committee on Appropriations has not made the required section 302(b) suballocations, and the motion to recommit provides new budget authority in violation of section 302(c) of the Budget Act. The point of order is sustained.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, if the majority is going to abuse the rules in such a way that the minority is precluded from meeting its responsibilities, I have no alternative but to appeal the ruling of the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is: Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the judgment of the House?

MOTION TO TABLE OFFERED BY MR. PUTNAM

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I move to lay the appeal on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. PUTNAM) to lay the appeal on the table.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 222, nays 196, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 15]

YEAS—222

Aderholt  
Akin  
Bachus  
Baker  
Ballenger  
Barrett (SC)  
Bartlett (MD)  
Barton (TX)  
Bass  
Beauprez  
Bereuter  
Biggert  
Bilirakis  
Bishop (UT)  
Blackburn  
Blunt  
Boehlert  
Boehner  
Bonilla  
Bonner  
Bono  
Boozman  
Bradley (NH)  
Brady (TX)  
Brown (SC)  
Brown-Waite,  
Ginny  
Burgess  
Burns  
Burr  
Buyer  
Calvert  
Camp  
Cannon  
Cantor  
Capito  
Carter  
Castle  
Chabot  
Chocola  
Coble  
Cole  
Collins  
Cox  
Crane  
Crenshaw  
Culberson  
Cunningham  
Davis, Jo Ann  
Davis, Tom  
Deal (GA)  
DeLay  
DeMint  
Diaz-Balart, L.  
Diaz-Balart, M.  
Doolittle  
Dreier  
Duncan  
Dunn  
Ehlers  
Emerson  
English  
Everett  
Feeney  
Ferguson  
Flake  
Fletcher  
Foley  
Forbes  
Fossella  
Franks (AZ)  
Frelinghuysen  
Gallegly  
Garrett (NJ)  
Gerlach

Gibbons  
Gilchrest  
Gillmor  
Gingrey  
Goode  
Goodlatte  
Goss  
Granger  
Graves  
Green (WI)  
Greenwood  
Gutknecht  
Hall  
Harris  
Hart  
Hastings (WA)  
Hayes  
Hayworth  
Hefley  
Hensarling  
Hobson  
Hoekstra  
Hostettler  
Houghton  
Hulshof  
Hunter  
Hyde  
Isakson  
Issa  
Istook  
Janklow  
Jenkins  
Johnson (CT)  
Johnson (IL)  
Johnson, Sam  
Jones (NC)  
Keller  
Kelly  
Kennedy (MN)  
King (IA)  
King (NY)  
Kingston  
Kirk  
Kline  
Knollenberg  
Kolbe  
LaHood  
Latham  
LaTourette  
Leach  
Lewis (KY)  
Linder  
LoBiondo  
Lucas (OK)  
Manzullo  
McCotter  
McCrery  
McHugh  
McInnis  
McKeon  
Mica  
Miller (FL)  
Miller (MI)  
Miller, Gary  
Moran (KS)  
Murphy  
Musgrave  
Myrick  
Nethercutt  
Ney  
Northup  
Norwood  
Nunes  
Nussle  
Osborne

NAYS—196

Abercrombie  
Ackerman  
Alexander  
Allen  
Andrews  
Baca  
Baird  
Baldwin  
Ballance  
Becerra  
Bell  
Berkley  
Berman  
Berry  
Bishop (GA)  
Bishop (NY)  
Blumenauer  
Boswell  
Boucher

Boyd  
Brady (PA)  
Brown (OH)  
Capps  
Capuano  
Cardin  
Cardoza  
Carson (IN)  
Carson (OK)  
Case  
Clay  
Clyburn  
Conyers  
Cooper  
Costello  
Cramer  
Crowley  
Cummings  
Davis (AL)

Ose  
Otter  
Oxley  
Paul  
Pearce  
Pence  
Peterson (PA)  
Petri  
Pickering  
Pitts  
Platts  
Pombo  
Porter  
Portman  
Pryce (OH)  
Putnam  
Quinn  
Radanovich  
Ramstad  
Regula  
Rehberg  
Renzi  
Reynolds  
Rogers (AL)  
Rogers (KY)  
Rogers (MI)  
Rohrabacher  
Ros-Lehtinen  
Royce  
Ryan (WI)  
Ryun (KS)  
Saxton  
Schrock  
Sensenbrenner  
Sessions  
Shadegg  
Shays  
Sherwood  
Shimkus  
Shuster  
Simmons  
Simpson  
Smith (MI)  
Smith (NJ)  
Smith (TX)  
Souder  
Stearns  
Sullivan  
Sweeney  
Tancredo  
Tauzin  
Taylor (NC)  
Terry  
Thomas  
Thornberry  
Tiahrt  
Tiberi  
Toomey  
Turner (OH)  
Upton  
Vitter  
Walden (OR)  
Walsh  
Wamp  
Weldon (FL)  
Weldon (PA)  
Weller  
Whitfield  
Wicker  
Wilson (SC)  
Wolf  
Young (AK)  
Young (FL)

Fattah  
Filner  
Ford  
Frank (MA)  
Frost  
Gephardt  
Gonzalez  
Gordon  
Green (TX)  
Grijalva  
Harman  
Hastings (FL)  
Hill  
Hinchey  
Hinojosa  
Hoeffel  
Holden  
Holt  
Honda  
Hooley (OR)  
Hoyer  
Inslie  
Israel  
Jackson (IL)  
Jackson-Lee  
(TX)  
Jefferson  
John  
Jones (OH)  
Kanjorski  
Kaptur  
Kennedy (RI)  
Kildee  
Kilpatrick  
Kind  
Kleczka  
Kucinich  
Lampson  
Langevin  
Lantos  
Larsen (WA)  
Larson (CT)  
Lee  
Levin  
Lewis (GA)  
Lipinski  
Lofgren  
Lowey

Lucas (KY)  
Lynch  
Majette  
Maloney  
Markey  
Marshall  
Matheson  
Matsui  
McCarthy (MO)  
McCarthy (NY)  
McCollum  
McDermott  
McGovern  
McIntyre  
McNulty  
Meehan  
Meek (FL)  
Meeks (NY)  
Menendez  
Michaud  
Millender-Solis  
McDonald  
Miller (NC)  
Miller, George  
Mollohan  
Moore  
Moran (VA)  
Murtha  
Nadler  
Napolitano  
Neal (MA)  
Oberstar  
Obey  
Ortiz  
Owens  
Pallone  
Pascarelli  
Pastor  
Payne  
Pelosi  
Peterson (MN)  
Pomeroy  
Price (NC)  
Rahall  
Rangel  
Reyes  
Rodriguez  
Ross

Rothman  
Roybal-Allard  
Ruppersberger  
Rush  
Ryan (OH)  
Sabo  
Sanchez, Linda  
T.  
Sanchez, Loretta  
Sanders  
Sandlin  
Schakowsky  
Schiff  
Scott (GA)  
Scott (VA)  
Serrano  
Sherman  
Skeltan  
Slaughter  
Snyder  
Solis  
Spratt  
Stark  
Stenholm  
Strickland  
Stupak  
Tanner  
Tauscher  
Taylor (MS)  
Thompson (CA)  
Thompson (MS)  
Tierney  
Towns  
Turner (TX)  
Udall (CO)  
Udall (NM)  
Van Hollen  
Velazquez  
Visclosky  
Waters  
Watt  
Weiner  
Wexler  
Woolsey  
Wu  
Wynn

NOT VOTING—16

Brown, Corrine  
Burton (IN)  
Combest  
Cubin  
DeLauro  
Doggett

Gutierrez  
Herger  
Johnson, E. B.  
Lewis (CA)  
Oliver  
Shaw

Smith (WA)  
Watson  
Waxman  
Wilson (NM)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY) (during the vote). Members have 2 minutes to record their votes.

□ 1351

Messrs. McDERMOTT, RUSH, RUPPERSBERGER, EVANS, SCOTT of Georgia, LYNCH, and Mrs. JONES of Ohio changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. RYUN of Kansas, ROGERS of Michigan, and HALL changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the motion to table was agreed to.

So the decision of the Chair stands as the judgment of the House.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this chamber on January 27, 2003 and I would like the record to show that had I been present in this chamber, I would have voted “yea” on rollcall vote 13 and “yea” on rollcall 14. Also, I was briefly absent from this chamber on January 28, 2003 and missed voting on rollcall vote 15. I want the record to show that had I been present in this chamber, I would have voted “no” on rollcall vote 15.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT OFFERED BY MR. OBEY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I have another motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair assumes the gentleman is still opposed to the resolution.

Mr. OBEY. Safe assumption, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. OBEY moves to recommit the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 13, to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report the same back promptly with an amendment further amending Section 101 of Public Law 107-229:

1. to provide \$3,500,000,000 in homeland security grants to equip first responders, and

2. to provide \$90 million for the Centers for Disease Control for baseline health screening and long-term medical monitoring of emergency response and recovery personnel exposed to toxic substances at the World Trade Center site.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) is recognized for 5 minutes on his motion.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I will not take the 5 minutes, but let me simply say that this motion simply does two things. It would provide that we will approve \$3.5 billion in homeland security grants to first responders, and it will provide the additional \$90 million that is needed to continue the study of long-term medical effects caused by the disaster of 9-11 when our firemen and our policemen and other emergency workers immediately responded to the hits on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center.

When those firemen and policemen and other emergency workers responded to the Nation's needs at the Pentagon and at the World Trade Center and in Pennsylvania, for that matter as well, on 9-11, they did not stop to ask does this fit in our fiscal year? Are we going to exceed our budgets? They simply responded, did their duty, and did what had to be done. Today I want to make clear this motion will not bust the Republican budget. Even if this money is still provided, we will still be within the overall ceilings of the Republican budget resolution. So no one can claim if they vote against this motion that they did so in order to preserve the sanctity of the budget, resolution because we do not breach it.

I would simply urge the House to adopt the motion.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we do not have a real argument here because we are not opposed to providing this funding, and the only difference we have is that it does not belong on a CR. It belongs in the 2003 final bill, or it belongs in the supplemental which will be coming very quickly. So what I would suggest is that we defeat this motion, we pass the CR, and then we get prepared to finish up the fiscal 2003 appropriations business.

Again, as I pointed out in my earlier comments, I think what is happening here is that we are trying to create an argument where no argument really exists. We believe in homeland security and first responders as strongly as anybody else. We have already proven that. We have taken the lead in that. President Bush has taken the lead in that. We have done a good job as the majority party in leading this Congress to deal with the preemption of, and the need to respond to, weapons of mass destruction, and terrorist attacks or whatever else we may have to face. And we still recognize the need to do more.

□ 1400

Now, there is a lot of work that needs to be done. But the funding that is called for in this motion is going to be addressed but it does not belong on a CR.

Let us kill the motion, let us pass the CR, and then get along with the rest of our business.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of Mr. OBEY's motion to recommit this CR.

By now, we've all read or heard about the Hart-Rudman Independent Task Force report stating that the United States remains "dangerously unprepared" for another terrorist attack.

The Task Force determined that first responders are not prepared for a chemical or biological attack, their radios cannot communicate with one another, and they lack the training and protective gear to protect themselves and the public in an emergency. As the Task Force report stated simply and chillingly—"The consequence could be the unnecessary loss of thousands of American lives."

I am outraged that this President, who declared war against terrorism, is itching for a war with Iraq, and started sowing the seeds of conflict with North Korea with his "axis of evil" speech, is now telling the American people that we can't afford to invest in homeland security. It stands to reason that the closer our nation gets to war, the greater the threat of another domestic terrorism attack becomes.

When your national security policy stumbles from a vague declaration of war against an ideology, to crying foul before the first IAEA inspector enters Iraq, to antagonizing national leaders with name-calling, you can't afford not to pay for homeland security.

Federal funds are desperately needed to equip firefighters, protect our ports and borders, enhance airport security, defend against agricultural terrorism, and protect our critical infrastructure.

I'd like to quote, if I may, a letter I received from the Mayor of the City of Oakland Park, Florida. "I am writing to express my deep concern that funding for first responders, promised nearly a year ago, has still not been provided to America's cities, towns and villages." I have received similar letters from community leaders throughout my District, and when they write expressing concerns about homeland security, they have my undivided attention. I would venture to guess that most of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have received similar letters as well.

I urge you to support Mr. OBEY's motion.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield back my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9, rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 201, yeas 222, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 16]

AYES—201

Abercrombie	Gonzalez	Miller (NC)
Ackerman	Gordon	Miller, George
Alexander	Green (TX)	Mollohan
Allen	Grijalva	Moore
Andrews	Gutierrez	Moran (VA)
Baca	Harman	Murtha
Baird	Hastings (FL)	Nadler
Baldwin	Hill	Napolitano
Ballance	Hinchey	Neal (MA)
Becerra	Hinojosa	Oberstar
Bell	Hoeffel	Obey
Berkley	Holden	Ortiz
Berman	Holt	Owens
Berry	Honda	Pallone
Bishop (GA)	Hooley (OR)	Pascarell
Bishop (NY)	Hoyer	Pastor
Blumenauer	Inlee	Payne
Boswell	Israel	Pelosi
Boucher	Jackson (IL)	Peterson (MN)
Boyd	Jackson-Lee	Pomeroy
Brady (PA)	(TX)	Price (NC)
Brown (OH)	Jefferson	Rahall
Capps	John	Rangel
Capuano	Jones (OH)	Reyes
Cardin	Kanjorski	Rodriguez
Cardoza	Kaptur	Ross
Carson (IN)	Kennedy (RI)	Rothman
Carson (OK)	Kildee	Roybal-Allard
Case	Kilpatrick	Ruppersberger
Clay	Kind	Rush
Clyburn	Kleccka	Ryan (OH)
Conyers	Kucinich	Sabo
Cooper	Lampson	Sanchez, Linda
Costello	Langevin	T.
Cramer	Lantos	Sanchez, Loretta
Crowley	Larsen (WA)	Sanders
Cummings	Larson (CT)	Sandlin
Davis (AL)	Lee	Schakowsky
Davis (CA)	Levin	Schiff
Davis (FL)	Lewis (GA)	Scott (GA)
Davis (IL)	Lipinski	Scott (VA)
Davis (TN)	Lofgren	Serrano
DeFazio	Lowe	Sherman
DeGette	Lucas (KY)	Skelton
Delahunt	Lynch	Slaughter
DeLauro	Majette	Smith (WA)
Deutsch	Maloney	Snyder
Dicks	Markey	Solis
Dingell	Marshall	Spratt
Doggett	Matheson	Stark
Dooley (CA)	Matsui	Stenholm
Doyle	McCarthy (MO)	Strickland
Edwards	McCarthy (NY)	Stupak
Emanuel	McCollum	Tanner
Engel	McDermott	Tauscher
Eshoo	McGovern	Taylor (MS)
Etheridge	McIntyre	Thompson (CA)
Evans	McNulty	Thompson (MS)
Farr	Meehan	Tierney
Fattah	Meek (FL)	Towns
Filner	Meeks (NY)	Turner (TX)
Ford	Menendez	Udall (CO)
Frank (MA)	Michaud	Udall (NM)
Frost	Millender	Van Hollen
Gephardt	McDonald	Velazquez

Visclosky  
Waters  
Watson

Watt  
Weiner  
Wexler

Woolsey  
Wu  
Wynn

## NOES—222

Aderholt  
Akin  
Bachus  
Baker  
Ballenger  
Barrett (SC)  
Bartlett (MD)  
Barton (TX)  
Bass  
Beauprez  
Bereuter  
Bigert  
Bilirakis  
Bishop (UT)  
Blackburn  
Blunt  
Boehlert  
Boehner  
Bonilla  
Bonner  
Bono  
Boozman  
Bradley (NH)  
Brady (TX)  
Brown (SC)  
Brown-Waite,  
    Ginny  
Burgess  
Burns  
Burr  
Buyer  
Calvert  
Camp  
Cannon  
Cantor  
Capito  
Carter  
Castle  
Chabot  
Chocola  
Coble  
Cole  
Collins  
Cox  
Crane  
Crenshaw  
Culberson  
Cunningham  
Davis, Jo Ann  
Davis, Tom  
Deal (GA)  
DeLay  
DeMint  
Diaz-Balart, L.  
Diaz-Balart, M.  
Doolittle  
Dreier  
Duncan  
Dunn  
Ehlers  
Emerson  
English  
Everett  
Feeney  
Ferguson  
Flake  
Fletcher  
Foley  
Forbes  
Fossella  
Franks (AZ)  
Frelinghuysen  
Gallegly  
Garrett (NJ)  
Gerlach

## NOT VOTING—11

Brown, Corrine  
Burton (IN)  
Combest  
Cubin  
Herger  
Johnson, E. B.  
Lewis (CA)  
Oliver  
Shaw  
Waxman  
Wilson (NM)

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised they have 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1416

Mr. GILLMOR changed his vote from "aye" to "no."

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 15, Table the Appeal of the Ruling of the Chair (House Joint Resolution 13), had I been present, I would have voted "no."

Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 16, On Motion to Recommit with Instructions (House Joint Resolution 13), had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). The question is on the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## ELECTION OF MAJORITY MEMBERSHIP TO COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Republican Conference, I call up a privileged resolution (H. Res. 34) election of majority membership on the Committee on House Administration, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

## H. RES. 34

*Resolved*, That the following named Members be, and are hereby, elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives: Committee on House Administration: Mr. EHLERS; Mr. MICA; Mr. LINDER; Mr. DOOLITTLE and Mr. REYNOLDS.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 111

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 111.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair desires to make an announcement.

After consultation with the majority and minority leaders, and with their consent and approval, the Chair announces that tonight when the two Houses meet in joint session to hear an address by the President of the United States, only the doors immediately opposite the Speaker and those on his left and right will be open.

No one will be allowed on the floor of the House who does not have the privilege of the floor of the House.

Due to the large attendance that is anticipated, the Chair feels that the rule regarding the privileges of the floor must be strictly adhered to.

Children of Members will not be permitted on the floor, and the cooperation of all Members is requested.

The practice of reserving seats prior to the joint session by placard will not be allowed. Members may reserve their seats by physical presence only following the security sweep of the Chamber.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will now recognize Members for Special Orders until 5 p.m., at which time the Chair will declare the House in recess.

## SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

## REVISIONS TO THE 302(a) ALLOCATIONS AND BUDGETARY AGGREGATES ESTABLISHED BY THE CONCURRENT RESOLUTIONS ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEARS 200 AND 200

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker. I am transmitting a status report on the current levels of on-budget spending and revenues for fiscal year 2003 and for the five-year period of fiscal years 2003 through 2007. This report is necessary to facilitate the application of sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional budget Act and section 301 of House Concurrent Resolution 353, which is currently in effect as a concurrent resolution on the budget in the House. This status report is current through January 27, 2003.

The "current level" refers to the amounts of spending and revenues estimated for each fiscal year based on laws enacted or awaiting the President's signature.

The first table in the report compares the current levels of total budget authority, outlays, and revenues with the aggregate levels set forth by H. Con. Res. 353. The comparison is needed to enforce section 311(a) of the Budget Act, which creates a point of order against measures that would breach the budget resolution's aggregate levels. The table does not show budget authority and outlays for years after fiscal year 2003 because appropriations for those years have not yet been considered.

The second table compares the current levels of budget authority and outlays for discretionary action by each authorizing committee with the "section 302(a)" allocations made under H. Con. Res. 353 for fiscal year 2003 and fiscal year 2003 through 2007. "Discretionary action" refers to legislation enacted after the adoption of the budget resolution. A separate allocation for the Medicare program, as established under section 231(d) of the budget resolution, is shown for fiscal year